

Somewhere to Begin by TangiblyYours

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Warnings: Richie Tozier's fantastically vulgar mouth, but that's about it.

Disclaimer: Do not own this franchise, am not Stephen King.

Richie Tozier was cemented into the ground beneath him, arms plastered to his side, unable to open his mouth, unable to yell, unable to fucking *move*.

It all happened in slow motion, and all he could do was watch in horror, bile rising into his throat, his muscles trying so desperately to crawl out of his unmoving body. Eddie was on top of him, screaming something, eyes shining with pride, excitement; he was so fucking happy to tell him that he thought he actually killed it. But behind him, Richie could see the movement-the uprising of the momentarily stationary fucking clown with talons.

And in that single moment, blood splattered across his face, fucking Eddie's blood, and one of those talons was sticking out of the front of Eddie's chest. Fear now replaced the excitement that had previously resided on Eddie's features, contorted in pain. Richie couldn't even reach out to him, still just frozen in place and covered in Eddie's blood.

Vaguely, and somewhere far in the distance Richie could hear: '*beep, beep, motherfucker!*'

And, suddenly, he was dropped from where he had been suspended in the air, caught in Pennywise's dead lights. His head hit the ground and it bounced off the rocks beneath him, enough to briefly jostle his brain, incite confusion. *What the fuck was happening? Did he just watch Eddie die?*

Yet again, everything was playing in slow motion, only this time Richie was able to move. He raised his head slightly, watching, disoriented, as Eddie ran up to him and shook his shoulders. "There he is, buddy!" Eddie shouted, still shaking him, and Richie was trying so hard to figure out what was happening. It seemed like he just saw this, and the ending was not a great one. "Listen, I think I got it, man!"

And as those words left Eddie's lips, reality bounced back to Richie so hard it felt like it knocked the breath right out of his lungs.

He lunged forward, cutting Eddie off entirely from what he was saying, and pulled him backwards. It took every ounce of strength he had to roll them down and away from the talon that stabbed the air right where Eddie had been kneeling over him. But he had *seen* it, he had known what was coming.

Once they started rolling down the jagged incline, they couldn't stop, not until they slammed full force into a large earthy slab at the bottom of the hill. Without even thinking, and knowing full well they were far from the threat of danger, Richie jumped to his feet. He pulled Eddie up as hard as he could, uncaring that the other man was distinctly struggling to keep up. He pulled Eddie along as though their lives depended on it. And maybe they did. Soon they reached the cavern that they had surfaced from, and he tucked them down, beneath one of the of rock slabs and entirely out of sight.

Only then did Richie realize how hard he was breathing. His entire body was trembling, his muscles aching from the strain of all but dragging Eddie to the hidden cavern. His hearing was muffled, as though his ears had been stuffed with cotton. He could only vaguely hear his friends shouting at them; Eddie was yelling something, too, but he couldn't make out what exactly.

Adrenaline was coursing through every vein in his body at the speed of lightening. He couldn't even wrap his head around what had just happened. He was fucking spinning, mentally and what felt like physically. His legs gave out then, and he stumbled against the gravel slab. And suddenly, Eddie was there, holding him upright, grounding him to where he stood.

All Richie could do was stare at him for a moment. Eddie was still shouting something at him, but he had no idea what he was saying. Once again, it was like everything was moving in slow motion, his breathing was the only thing coming fast.

As Richie stared at him, there was this fire in the pit of his gut. He had just been stuck in the dead lights; he had *seen* Eddie die. He had felt the splash of the Eddie's blood across his face. Watched it all unfold, before it had even happened.

And because of that, he was able to stop it.

He takes a moment to realize if he hadn't of seen it happen, that would have been his reality.

Eddie would be dead and gone.

Without even registering his movements, Richie was holding onto Eddie's face, focusing on every detail in front of him. All he could do watch stare at him, drinking in every bit of this man who was almost snatched away from his very fingertips. It was surreal. Richie couldn't wrap his head around any of what was happening.

Sound returned to him in that moment.

"Richie," Eddie shouted. "*Wake the fuck up!* We've got to help them!" And he was pulling at Richie, who was still cupping Eddie's face, afraid to let go. "They've got him, we've got to help, we've got to do this!"

Eddie pulled out from Richie's grasp, and continued to yank on Richie's arm, but he was rooted in place. From the distance, Richie could hear Bill calling Eddie's name: *'Eddie, it's fine, he needs a minute, just come here!'*

And then Eddie was gone, nowhere in sight, and Richie felt like he was going to have a full blown panic attack. He pressed his back against the rock structure behind him and slid to the ground. The jagged rock dug into his back, pulling his shirt up as he slid down and leaving bloody abrasions in its wake. But he didn't care, because Richie was a very tactile person, and he had just seen Eddie die and

now he was nowhere to be seen. He needed him there, needed to see that he was real, touch him and probably never let go ever again.

What Richie felt in that moment was simple: fear. A deep, aching hole in the center of his stomach, growing and devouring everything in its wake, consuming him entirely. He felt like he was going to throw up, his hands were shaking. He didn't know what he needed to do to make this feeling go away, but he was spinning out of control, he was sure of that.

Suddenly rocks started to tumble down around him, he couldn't even identify where they were coming from. It was loud, too, as though the world around him was splitting in half.

Eddie was there in the next moment, grabbing onto his arm and pulling him. Bev was there, too, and Bill and Mike and Ben, and they were all grabbing on to him and pulling him toward where they came in at.

It all happened so fast, and suddenly, Richie was watching from Neibolt street as the house of their nightmares collapsed in front of their very eyes.

He hadn't thought it was possible, but his breathing became even more labored and rampant, and if it wasn't for the many hands holding him upright, Richie was certain he'd have been on his knees. He couldn't completely register his reality, his mind was spinning, his vision fading in and out as he struggled to control his breathing.

"*Motherfucker!*" Eddie shouted. "Calm down or you're going to pass out!"

Richie turned toward the voice and locked eyes with Eddie. Without any conscious awareness that he was moving, Richie lunged toward Eddie, grabbing onto him with fervor and intensity. He held his face in between his hands, just staring, unable to completely wrap his head around the fact that Eddie was almost just killed.

"You were dead!" Richie shouted suddenly and it was silent. "You were dead, you were *fucking dead!*"

He couldn't control himself, wasn't even conscious that he was yelling, just kept repeating himself like a skipping record. Around them, Beverly, Bill, Mike, and Ben watched. Watched as Richie grasped so tightly onto Eddie's shirt they thought he was going to rip it.

Watched as he yelled, choked, between every ragged breath he took, unable to stop.

Eddie was holding onto Richie's elbows, trying to calm the other man. He cut his eyes over to Bill, pleading, unsure of what to do, how to handle this hysterical man who was essentially falling apart in front of their very eyes. Bill joined Eddie, helped to stabilize Richie as much as he could. "Richie, c'mon, you're gonna have to calm down, it's fine, *he's fine*."

And then it was silent. Richie stood, quiet now, and his breathing slowed to a reasonable pace. He took in his surroundings, looked at everyone of his friends. Shifted his gaze to where the Neibolt house had been. Glanced down the street, carefully. It was warm out. The sun was there, and pressing down on the back of his neck, heating him from the inside.

It took several moments, but he felt him come back to himself.

Took one deep, filling breath.

Held it, tight in his lungs.

Glanced around to his friends once more.

And allowed himself to realize that they did it. They finally killed that fuckass clown.

Calm now, Richie turned to face Bill, still hanging onto Eddie's shirt. "He killed him, Bill. I saw it, he killed him."

"B-but it wasn't *real*, Richie, see?" Bill returned, gesturing to Eddie, while also trying to carefully loosen Richie's tight grasp on the other's shirt. "You saved him, and it's fine now, everything is fine. *We're all okay*."

Richie took one more large, deep breath. He looked to Eddie, and loosened his grip on his shirt, gentle now and careful. "You're okay," he whispered, not even remotely ashamed of the ache in his voice. The fear that dripped from every syllable.

And Eddie smiled, wide. Happy. Alive. "I'm okay, Richie."

Author's Note: So, this quite literally came out of nowhere. There's definitely going to be more to this. I am marking it as complete, because I haven't decided if I'm going to make it as part of a series or just add chapters to this specific piece. Richie and Eddie's story is just beginning.

Thanks for reading! As always, comments and thoughts are appreciated.